

## Take the next step

Yes, Step Ahead is ending. For two years we have given you information, encouraging you to be active and eat well. Hundreds of you have read our newsletter, tried our recipes and our walking routes. In this last newsletter, we say keep up the good work and keep in mind these Step Ahead themes.

**Step ahead at work.** Most American adults spend one third of their time at work, so it makes sense to include physical activity and healthy eating in our work routine as well as at home. Take walking breaks instead of coffee breaks, use onsite walking routes, bring Step Ahead recipes in your lunch bag and use the recipes to organize a potluck meal.

**Adopt habits for the long term.** Work **physical activity** into your daily routine and also include regular exercise sessions or active sports. **Healthy eating habits** are better than “diets”.

**Take small steps; they will add up to big changes together and over time.** Even if you need to make a big change or more than one change, breaking things up into small parts will make them seem more within reach.

**Make a plan and set goals.** Have a long-term goal, but be sure to develop short term goals that you can

easily reach, and then build on your success.

**Keep track of things.** Add up the time you spend exercising, the steps you take or miles you bike. If you want to improve your eating habits, write down everything you eat. If you want to maintain or lose weight, weigh yourself at least once a week and keep records. Look over your totals, lists and records; it may inspire you to do even better!

**You don't have to go it alone.** Ask someone to exercise with you or work on healthier eating together. Join a team, an exercise class or a group weight loss program.

**Keep going even when you don't stick to your plan.** Don't be too hard on yourself. Look back only to see what you can learn and then move on.

**Thank you** from the Step Ahead team for being part of our project!

**Has Step Ahead helped you?** We want to hear about it! Please share your story about how Step Ahead helped you increase your physical activity, improve your diet or lose weight. Email [barbara.estabrook@umassmed.edu](mailto:barbara.estabrook@umassmed.edu) or call Barbara at 508-856-3570. Thanks!

### Recipe of the Week: Lentil Salad with Balsamic Vinaigrette serves 6

1 1" thick slice of red onion, plus 1 cup chopped red onion  
3 fresh parsley sprigs plus ½ cup chopped fresh parsley  
2 garlic cloves, minced  
1 cup dried brown lentils  
2 Tablespoons olive oil  
3 Tablespoons balsamic vinegar  
2 Teaspoons Dijon mustard

1. Bring medium saucepan of water to boil Add onion slice, 3 parsley sprigs and 1 minced garlic

clove and return to boil. Stir in lentils. Reduce heat. Simmer uncovered until lentils are just tender, about 20 minutes. Drain. Discard onion and parsley.

2. Stir oil, vinegar, mustard and remaining garlic in small saucepan till just warm. Do not boil.

3. Place warm lentils in bowl. Add chopped onion, chopped parsley and warm vinaigrette. Toss to coat. Season with salt and pepper. Serve warm or at room temperature.

**Nutrition information:**

Calories: 239      Total fat: 8g      Saturated fat: 1g  
Dietary fiber: 9g      Protein: 13g

**Tip of the Week:** Make the most of fresh local produce from farm stands and farmers markets! • Buy at the peak of the season when the supply is best and cost may be lower. • Ask if there's a discount for buying a large amount or for “seconds”. • Ask the farmer for ideas on how to prepare, store and preserve produce. • Get to the farmers market when it opens; check the supply and prices at each vendor. Bargains may sell out before the market closes! • Plan ahead; buy only what you can use quickly. Most summer crops are at their best within a day or two of picking. • Find local and regional farm stands and farmers markets at <http://www.massfarmersmarkets.org/> and [www.farmfresh.org](http://www.farmfresh.org). • Find places to “pick your own” at [www.pickyourown.org/massbluerasp.htm](http://www.pickyourown.org/massbluerasp.htm).  
*Adapted from [www.realsimple.com](http://www.realsimple.com) and [LearnVest.com](http://LearnVest.com).*